No. II.

PAPERS

RESPECTING THE

NEGOCIATION

FOR A RENEWAL OF THE

East-India Company's Exclusive Trade.

PRINTED BY THE COURT OF DIRECTORS

FOR THE

INFORMATION OF THE PROPRIETORS.

No. II.

P A P E R S

Company's Petition to the House of Commons, praying to be heard at the General Court the 8th March 1793.

RESPECTING THE

NEGOCIATION

FOR A RENEWAL OF THE

East-India Company's Exclusive Trade.

Report of the Committee of Correspondence, dated the 10th March 1793.

Letter from the Chairman to the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, dated the 6th June 1793.

No. V.

PRINTED BY THE COURT OF DIRECTORS

No. VI.

FOR THE

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No. VII.

No. 2.

LIST of Papers reſpecting the Negociation for a Renewal of the Eaſt-India Company's Excluſive Trade, printed by the Court of Directors for the Information of the Proprietors.

No. I.

The Company's Petition to the Houſe of Commons approved in the General Court the 8th March 1793.

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Copy of the Clauſe propoſed to be inſerted in the impending Act, for a new Charter, by the Agents, for Perſons reſident in the Eaſt-Indies.

No. 2.

List of Papers referring to the Negotiation for a Renewal of the East-India Company's Exclusive Privileges.

The Company's Petition to the House of Commons.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the Right Honourable the Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies,

Sheweth,

No. IV.

THAT by an Act of Parliament made in the [illegible] year of the reign of His present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for establishing an Agreement with the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East-Indies," for the payment of the sum of four hundred thousand pounds, for the use of the Public, in discharge and satisfaction of all claims and demands of the said Company from the time the bond debt of the said Company was reduced to one million five hundred thousand pounds, until the 25th day of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-one; and for the territorial acquisitions and revenues lately obtained to the Public; and also for securing to the Public the sum therein mentioned, and other purposes therein mentioned; and by another Act passed in the [illegible] year of the reign of His present Majesty, for [illegible]

The Company's Petition to the Houſe of Commons approved in the General Court, the 8th March 1793.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament aſſembled.

The humble Petition of the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the Eaſt-Indies,

SHEWETH,

THAT by an Act of Parliament made in the 21ſt year of the reign of His preſent Majeſty, intitled, "An Act for eſtabliſhing "an Agreement with the United Company of Merchants of "England trading to the Eaſt-Indies," for the payment of the ſum of four hundred thouſand pounds, for the uſe of the Public, in full diſcharge and ſatisfaction of all claims and demands of the Public, from the time the bond debt of the ſaid Company was reduced to one million five hundred thouſand pounds, until the 1ſt day of March, one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty-one, in reſpect of the territorial acquiſitions and revenues lately obtained in the Eaſt-Indies; and alſo for ſecuring to the Public, in reſpect thereof, for a term therein mentioned, a certain part or proportion of the clear revenues and profits of the ſaid Company; and for granting to the ſaid Company, for a further term, the ſole and excluſive trade to

and from the East-Indies and limits therein mentioned; and for eſtabliſhing certain regulations for the better management of the affairs of the ſaid Company, as well in India as in Europe; and for recruiting the military forces of the ſaid Company. It was (amongſt other things) enacted, that your Petitioners (ſubject to the proviſo of determination thereinafter contained) ſhould have, uſe and enjoy the whole ſole and excluſive trade and traffic into and from the East-Indies, and into and from all places between the Cape of Good Hope and Streights of Magellan; and that they ſhould have, hold and enjoy, and be entitled unto all advantages, privileges, franchiſes and authorities whatſoever, which by any former Acts or by any Charters founded thereupon, were enacted, given, granted, or eſtabliſhed, concerning your Petitioners and the other Societies or Companies therein-mentioned, and not by that Act altered or intended to be altered, according to the true meaning of the ſaid Acts and Charters, and the ſame were thereby ratified and confirmed, in which ſaid Act is contained a proviſo, that at any time, upon three years notice to be given by Parliament, after the 1ſt day of March 1791, upon the expiration of the ſaid three years, and repayment to your Petitioners of the debt of four millions two hundred thouſand pounds due to them from the Public; and all arrears of annuity payable in reſpect thereof, in caſe the ſame ſhould not have been before repaid, then, and from thenceforth, and not before or ſooner, the ſaid right, title and intereſt of your Petitioners to the whole ſole and excluſive trade to the East-Indies and parts aforeſaid, ſhould ceaſe and determine; and by the ſaid Act, it was further enacted, that any notice, in writing, ſignified by the Speaker of the Houſe of Commons for the time being, by order of the ſaid Houſe, ſhould be deemed and judged a due and proper notice

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by Parliament: And it was further enacted, that all the territorial acquiſitions and revenues lately obtained in the Eaſt-Indies, ſhould remain in the poſſeſſion of your Petitioners for and during the term of the excluſive trade granted to them; and by the ſaid Act an appropriation was made agreeable to your Petitioners agreement of the clear profits ariſing from the ſaid territorial acquiſitions and revenues, together with your Petitioners clear revenues and profits ariſing during the continuance of the ſaid whole ſole and excluſive trade and traffick; and the ſaid Act was ſubject to a further proviſo; that nothing therein contained ſhould extend or be conſtrued to extend to prejudice or affect the rights or claims of the Public, or your Petitioners, reſpecting the ſaid territorial acquiſitions and revenues, as by the ſaid Act may more at large appear.

That the notice required by the ſaid Act of Parliament, hath been given by the Speaker of this Honourable Houſe, for determining the excluſive trade of your Petitioners on the firſt day of March, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-four.

Your Petitioners humbly repreſent to this Honourable Houſe, that the ſyſtem eſtabliſhed by the ſaid Act for the government of the territorial acquiſitions in the Eaſt-Indies, for the management of the revenues and for conducting the affairs of your Petitioners, aided by the regulations ſince introduced by the wiſdom of Parliament, hath been approved by experience; and as ſuch experience affords juſt reaſon to believe, that a continuance of ſuch ſyſtem will prove equally advantageous to the Public and to your Petitioners.

Your Petitioners moſt humbly pray, that leave may be given to bring a Bill into this Honourable Houſe for enlarging the

term of your Petitioners ſaid excluſive trade, and for continuing the government and management of the ſaid territorial acquiſitions and revenues in the manner preſcribed by the ſaid Acts of Parliament, without prejudice to the rights of your Petitioners or the claim of the Public as in the former Act is provided,

And your Petitioners ſhall ever pray.

East-India Houſe,
6th March, 1793.

No. II.

Minute of Monday 11th March 1793.

THE Chairman having received a letter from the Right Honorable Henry Dundas, deſiring a conference.

The Secretary, by direction of the Chairman, immediately wrote to the Members of the Committee of Correſpondence, deſiring their attendance at Mr. Pitt's Houſe in Downing-Street, at nine o'clock the next evening.

No. III.

Report of the Committee of Correſpondence, dated 13th March.

At a COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE,
13th March 1793.

THE Committee having attended at a conference laſt night with the Right Honorable William Pitt, and the Right Honorable Henry

Henry Dundas, proceeded to take the refult into their conſideration.

The ſubjects which were diſcuſſed at that conference, relate ſolely to the regulations under which the excluſive trade of the Company is to be conducted hereafter; and the Committee apprehend that His Majeſty's Miniſters have formed no deciſive opinion on the ſubject.

They appear to be impreſſed with a deſire of extending the exports and imports to and from India, including thoſe of private trade by all poſſible means.

That the exports from Europe ſhould be combined, in a certain degree, more or leſs, with the import of goods from India.

That meaſures ſhould be adopted to convert the clandeſtine trade into a fair, regular traffick, through the medium of the Company.

And that the charge of 7 per cent. which the Proprietors of private trade, pay to the Company, at preſent, ſhould be moderated.

To theſe points the Committee cannot have the ſlighteſt objection, as general principles. On the contrary, they have teſtified the ſincereſt diſpoſition to carry them into effect by every means in their power. They muſt, however, reſerve on behalf of their Conſtituents, a claim to ſuch conditions as have been agreed to by His Majeſty's Miniſters, and the General Court of Proprietors, together with ſuch other reſervations as may appear to be neceſſary for the general benefit. In particular for what may relate to the ſafety of the empire in India, and to enable the Company to liquidate their debts, and to fulfil the expectations which have been held out to the Public, on the faith that the excluſive trade would be continued to the Company for a further term.

The Letter from Mr. Dundas; the anſwer from the Directors; together with the reſult of the conferences which immediately followed; have been communicated to the Court of Proprietors, who have approved the principles therein contained. The Committee conceive, that the points which were reſerved on the part of His Majeſty's Miniſters at the conferences alluded to, were

A doubt, whether the quantity of tonnage offered by the Directors, was ſufficient for the purpoſe.

The ſame with regard to the rate of freight, and the rate of exchange.

Alſo, how far it was right to permit perſons, exporting the manufactures of Great Britain and Ireland, to inveſt the proceeds of thoſe manufactures in the produce of India.

If therefore His Majeſty's Miniſters entertain an opinion that the Company ought to yield in any other points, the Committee muſt requeſt they will be pleaſed to ſtate their ſentiments in writing, that the Committee may be enabled to ſubmit the ſame to their conſtituents, as His Majeſty's Miniſters will no doubt perceive, that the Court of Directors cannot hold forth any expectation different from the principles which have been admitted on all ſides.

The offer which has been made by the Company to furniſh eight ſhips on this occaſion, can have no other object in view, than to extend the exports and imports to and from India; from what this Committee can diſcover, His Majeſty's Miniſters appear to think the quantity of tonnage is ſufficient for ſome years, and as the rate of freight is leſs than what it will coſt the Company, and is leſs than what individuals muſt pay at Oſtend; whilſt the perſons who may export the manufactures of Great Britain and

Ireland, will be enabled to ſecure returns through the medium of the Company's caſh, at a more beneficial rate of exchange than any foreigner whatſoever can obtain; it is preſumed, that the ſubſtantial means are afforded to extend the export of the manufactures of this country, whilſt the ſame means muſt, in their operation, curtail, if not annihilate all clandeſtine trade whatſoever, except in the articles to be enumerated hereafter.

The Committee are perſuaded that His Majeſty's Miniſters are aware, that the trade carried on from any part on the Continent, ought to be diſtinguiſhed between that which is foreign, and that which is clandeſtine. The former it is neither poſſible or deſireable to ſuppreſs; and no better means can be deviſed at home to annihilate the latter, than the meaſures which have been already propoſed by the Court of Directors as beforementioned; unleſs His Majeſty's Miniſters ſhould think it proper to reſtrain all exportation from the Britiſh territories in India, except through the medium of the Company, by which means, all foreign and clandeſtine trade will be completely controlled.

The Reports which have been printed, enumerates the articles which compoſe the bulk of the clandeſtine trade outwards: namely,

Naval and Military Stores,
Liquids, and
Metals.

The former need no diſcuſſion at preſent, as it is preſumed no doubt can remain as to the propriety, and even neceſſity of their continuing excluſively with the Company. The liquors, which are foreign products, may alſo be deemed out of the queſtion, or otherwiſe.

With regard to metals, the Company have exported a quantity fully ſufficient for the ſupply of India, and are always diſpoſed to extend their purchaſes, when thoſe of Britiſh produce ſhall be at low-

low or reaſonable prices; in conſequence of the demand from other markets being checked. And it will be highly imprudent for the Company to extend the ſame indulgence to individuals for metals, as for manufactures; becauſe the Company being obliged to furniſh bills in India, or permit individuals to export Indian products in return; the article of copper alone, is ſo valuable, that it may produce diſtreſs upon their current engagements at home, in conſequence of bills to be drawn; or the ſame effect may reſult from a permiſſion to augment the Indian inveſtment to ſuch an extent, as will exceed the demand in Europe; by which means, heavy loſs muſt ariſe upon the whole of the Company's Sales, as this Committee can remember when the Company have ſold their goods at a loſs of 30 and 40 per Cent. and even more, from the neceſſity they were under to liquidate their current engagements. It has been moreover obſerved in the reports, that there was no myſtery or ingenuity neceſſary for the diſpoſal of metals. The Company's Warehouſes in India being always open to the buyers, upon the moſt moderate terms.

The Committee are at a loſs to know, to what points His Majeſty's Miniſters wiſh to receive information, with reſpect to the returns to be made from India, for the manufactures to be exported from home by individuals.

The Company have already made a moſt liberal offer, in the rate of exchange, at which they propoſe to furniſh bills on Europe, and it is their intention always to furniſh thoſe bills, ſo long as the ſtate of their affairs at home ſhall induce the Directors to think they can diſcharge thoſe bills without diſtreſs or embarraſſment to the Company. And the motive for ſuch an offer, doth not ariſe from the expectation of profit; as the Committee are inclined to think that notwithſtanding the ſuperior advantages

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the Company enjoy in India. A medium of any additional inveſtment to be purchaſed, will not yield an equivalent to the rate of exchange propoſed; but they are deſirous to run the riſk, with a view to avoid the greater and very extenſive evils which may ariſe from individuals purchaſing, in India, goods for the purpoſe of making returns for the proceeds of their manufactures.

The reſtrictions which Mr. Pitt has propoſed, namely, that ſuch individuals ſhall confine their purchaſes to the preſidencies, and not to interfere directly, or indirectly, with the Auzungs; that they ſhall not employ any perſon or perſons, who have not the licenſe of the Company to remain in India, are the beſt prevention which the nature of the caſe will admit; but it is very deſireable to prevent their interference, and this was the reaſon which induced the Court of Directors to offer ſo liberal a rate of exchange.

Independent of the more important political conſiderations, it would be extremely difficult to determine in what manner the quantity of tonnage homeward, ſhould be allotted, in return for the exports, which cannot on any account exceed, and muſt therefore on ſome occaſions be inſufficient; the propoſal of the Company to furniſh bills, muſt appear ſtill more liberal and candid, when it is conſidered, that, in addition to the uncertainty of realizing the rate of exchange, they will run an additional and conſiderable riſk with the ſurplus tonnage in India, which on many occaſions they cannot occupy, but for which they muſt nevertheleſs pay to the full extent.

The Committee however are decidedly of opinion, that if the option is not with the Company, it ought not to remain for the choice of individuals; but ſhould be fixed and determined previous to any further proceedings.

As the Committe do not apprehend that it is the wiſh of His Majeſty's Miniſters that they ſhould enter into any further detail at

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the preſent moment, they beg to obſerve, that the parts of the letter from Mr. Dundas, which apply to this ſubject, relate ſolely to the manufacturing intereſts of Great-Britain and Ireland, and which are amply provided for in every reſpect. The obſervations of the Court of Directors on that letter ſtate, that

"The ideas ſuggeſted by Mr. Dundas will require a more "correct definition and explanation on almoſt every point; in their "preſent form they go to the full extent of depriving the Com- "pany of their Excluſive Trade; whilſt the Company are "expected to provide freight for the Merchants and Manufac- "turers, at a rate cheaper than they can procure it elſe- "where.

"It is ſufficient merely to ſtate theſe facts, in order to ſatisfy "Mr. Dundas, that the Court of Directors never can recom- "mend, and that the Proprietors never can accede to either of "thoſe propoſitions in the general manner in which they are "ſtated in Mr. Dundas's Letter."

After which, the Directors threw out ſome principles which they conceived would facilitate the buſineſs, which have been approved by His Majeſty's Miniſters and the General Court of Proprietors. If therefore His Majeſty's Miniſters are enclined to entertain opinions which may extend the principles beyond thoſe which have been agreed to, they will be pleaſed to communicate the ſame in writing, that the Court of Directors may be enabled to take the ſenſe of their conſtituents; the more ſo as the Committee very much fear, that an extenſion beyond the principles which have been already eſtabliſhed will render the Company's Excluſive Trade to India altogether nugatory.

W. Bensley.
W. Devaynes.
J. Roberts.
Thos. Cheap.
Lionel Darell.
F. Baring.
J. Smith Burges.
John Hunter.
J. Manship.
Jno. Townson.

No. IV.

Letter from the Chairman to the Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas, dated the same Day.

East-India Houſe, 13th March, 1793.

SIR,

AT the requeſt of the Committee of Correſpondence I have the honor to incloſe you a copy of their ideas on the ſubjects of our conference laſt night.

I have the Honor to be, SIR,

Your moſt obedient and moſt humble Servant,

(Signed) F. BARING.

The Right Honorable
Henry Dundas, &c. &c. &c.

No. V.

Minute of Monday, 18th March, 1793.

IN conſequence of a note from the Chairman, the Secretary wrote to the Committee of Correſpondence to requeſt their attendance to-morrow morning at ten o'clock at Somerſet Place.

No. VI.

Letter from the Right Honorable Henry Dundas to the Chairman, dated the 18th March.

Whitehall, 18th March, 1793.

DEAR SIR,

MR. PITT and I wish to see you and the other Gentlemen of the Committee at Somerset Place to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

I have not wrote any thing to you in consequence of our last conference, having soon after that received a letter, (of which I understand a copy has been sent to you) from the persons connected with the clandestine trade, containing much matter tending to confirm every thing which upon general reasoning had before occurred to myself on the subject. Both Mr. Pitt and I are so strongly impressed with the importance of this subject on national grounds, that we are at a perfect loss, how it is possible to state with credit any part of the subject leaving that behind; you doubted the fact of the extent of the clandestine trade, but if the enclosed, which has been given to me, is not refuted, it seems impossible to call the truth of the fact in question.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) HENRY DUNDAS.

No. VII.

Copy of the Clause proposed to be inserted in the impending Act for a new Charter by the Agents for Persons resident in the East-Indies.

THAT it shall be lawful in future for British subjects and others living under the protection of His Majesty, in India or elsewhere, to purchase goods from, or sell goods to the subjects of all nations without exception, or to act for them on agency.